

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1 1. (Currently amended) A method for sharing a secure
2 communication session with a client between a plurality of servers, comprising:
3 receiving a message from the client at a first server in the plurality of
4 servers, the message including a session identifier that identifies a secure
5 communication session with the client; and

6 if the session identifier does not correspond to an active secure
7 communication session on the first server, establishing an active secure
8 communication session with the client on the first server by,

9 attempting to retrieve state information associated with the
10 session identifier for an active secure communication session
11 between the client and a second server from the plurality of
12 servers,

13 if the state information for the active secure communication
14 session is retrieved, using the state information to establish the
15 active secure communication session with the client without
16 having to communicate with the client, whereby the secure
17 communication session is transferred from the client and the
18 second server to the client and the first server without incurring the
19 overhead of establishing a new secure connection, and

20 if the state information for the active secure communication
21 session is not retrieved, communicating with the client to establish
22 the active secure communication session with the client.

1 2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein attempting to retrieve
2 the state information includes:

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3 attempting to use the session identifier to identify the second server in the
4 plurality of servers that has an active secure communication session with the
5 client that corresponds to the session identifier; and
6 attempting to retrieve the state information from the second server.

1 3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein attempting to retrieve
2 the state information involves attempting to retrieve the state information from a
3 centralized repository that is in communication with the plurality of servers.

1 4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the centralized
2 repository includes a database for storing the state information.

1 5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein establishing the active
2 secure communication session involves establishing a secure sockets layer (SSL)
3 connection with the client.

1 6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the state information
2 includes:
3 a session encryption key for the secure communication session;
4 the session identifier for the secure communication session; and
5 a running message digest for the secure communication session.

1 7. (Original) The method of claim 6, further comprising:
2 using the message to update the running message digest; and
3 checkpointing the updated running message digest to a location outside of
4 the first server.

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1 8. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising, if the state
2 information for the active secure communication session is retrieved, purging the
3 state information from a location from which the state information was retrieved,
4 so that the state information cannot be subsequently retrieved by another server in
5 the plurality of servers.

1 9. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising initially
2 establishing an active secure communication session between the client and the
3 second server, the active secure communication session being identified by the
4 session identifier.

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1 10. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein attempting to retrieve
2 the state information includes authenticating and authorizing the first server.

1 11. (Cancelled)

1 12. (Cancelled)

1 13. (Currently amended) A computer-readable storage medium storing
2 instructions that when executed by a computer cause the computer to perform a
3 method for sharing a secure communication session with a client between a
4 plurality of servers, the method comprising
5 receiving a message from the client at a first server in the plurality of
6 servers, the message including a session identifier that identifies a secure
7 communication session with the client; and
8 if the session identifier does not correspond to an active secure
9 communication session on the first server, establishing an active secure
10 communication session with the client on the first server by,

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attempting to retrieve state information associated with the
session identifier for an active secure communication session
between the client and a second server from the plurality of
servers,
if the state information for the active secure communication
session is retrieved, using the state information to establish the
active secure communication session with the client without
having to communicate with the client, whereby the secure
communication session is transferred from the client and the
second server to the client and the first server without incurring the
overhead of establishing a new secure connection, and
if the state information for the active secure communication
session is not retrieved, communicating with the client to establish
the active secure communication session with the client.

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14. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 13,
wherein attempting to retrieve the state information includes:
attempting to use the session identifier to identify the second server in the
plurality of servers that has an active secure communication session with the
client that corresponds to the session identifier; and
attempting to retrieve the state information from the second server.

15. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 13,
wherein attempting to retrieve the state information involves attempting to
retrieve the state information from a centralized repository that is in
communication with the plurality of servers.

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1 16. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 15,
2 wherein the centralized repository includes a database for storing the state
3 information.

1 17. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 13,
2 wherein establishing the active secure communication session involves
3 establishing a secure sockets layer (SSL) connection with the client.

1 18. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 13,
2 wherein the state information includes:
3 a session encryption key for the secure communication session;
4 the session identifier for the secure communication session; and
5 a running message digest for the secure communication session.

1 19. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 18,
2 wherein the method further comprises:
3 using the message to update the running message digest; and
4 checkpointing the updated running message digest to a location outside of
5 the first server.

1 20. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 13,
2 wherein the method further comprises, if the state information for the active
3 secure communication session is retrieved, purging the state information from a
4 location from which the state information was retrieved, so that the state
5 information cannot be subsequently retrieved by another server in the plurality of
6 servers.

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1 21. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 13,
2 wherein the method further comprises initially establishing an active secure
3 communication session between the client and the second server, the active secure
4 communication session being identified by the session identifier.

1 22. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 13,
2 wherein attempting to retrieve the state information includes authenticating and
3 authorizing the first server.

1 23. (Cancelled)

1 24. (Cancelled)

1 25. (Currently amended) An apparatus that shares a secure
2 communication session with a client between a plurality of servers, comprising:
3 a receiving mechanism, at a first server in the plurality of servers, that
4 receives a message from the client, the message including a session identifier that
5 identifies a secure communication session with the client;
6 an examination mechanism that examines the session identifier; and
7 a session initialization mechanism, on the first server, wherein if the
8 session identifier does not correspond to an active secure communication session
9 on the first server, the session initialization mechanism is configured to establish
10 an active secure communication session with the client by,
11 attempting to retrieve state information associated with the
12 session identifier for an active secure communication session
13 between the client and a second server from the plurality of
14 servers,

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if the state information for the active secure communication session is retrieved, using the state information to establish the active secure communication session with the client without having to communicate with the client, whereby the secure communication session is transferred from the client and the second server to the client and the first server without incurring the overhead of establishing a new secure connection, and
if the state information for the active secure communication session is not retrieved, communicating with the client to establish the active secure communication session with the client.

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26. (Original) The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the session initialization mechanism is configured to attempt to retrieve the state information by:
attempting to use the session identifier to identify the second server in the plurality of servers that has an active secure communication session with the client that corresponds to the session identifier; and
attempting to retrieve the state information from the second server.

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27. (Original) The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the session initialization mechanism is configured to attempt to retrieve the state information by attempting to retrieve the state information from a centralized repository that is in communication with the plurality of servers

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28. (Original) The apparatus of claim 27, wherein the centralized repository includes a database for storing the state information.

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1 29. (Original) The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the active secure
2 communication session includes a secure sockets layer (SSL) connection with the
3 client.

1 30. (Original) The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the state information
2 includes:
3 a session encryption key for the secure communication session;
4 the session identifier for the secure communication session; and
5 a running message digest for the secure communication session.

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1 31. (Original) The apparatus of claim 30, further comprising an
2 updating mechanism that is configured to:
3 use the message to update the running message digest; and to
4 checkpoint the updated running message digest to a location outside of the
5 first server.

1 32. (Original) The apparatus of claim 25, further comprising a purging
2 mechanism that is configured to purge the state information from a location from
3 which the state information was retrieved, so that the state information cannot be
4 subsequently retrieved by another server in the plurality of servers.

1 33. (Original) The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the session
2 initialization mechanism is configured to authenticate and authorize the first
3 server prior to receiving the state information.

1 34. (Cancelled)

1 35. (Cancelled)